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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Fri., Dec., 23, 1927.

Housekeepers' Chat

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Betty Jean's Sweet Tooth". Information, including new recipe and menu, from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. Bulletin available: "Food for Young Children".

--ooOoo--

I hope you won't think I have an ulterior motive, in talking about Betty Jean's sweet tooth, just before Christmas. As a matter of fact, the candy that Betty Jean eats on Christmas Day, won't have much effect on her teeth.

Betty Jean's teeth are strong and white, Because she keeps them clean? Well, partly. The other reason is that Betty Jean's teeth have always been properly fed. Before Betty Jean was born, her mother's diet included plenty of vegetables, milk, cereals, butter, and water. She knew that such a diet was necessary, if Betty Jean was to have properly developed teeth, and bones.

From the time Betty was two years old, until she was six, her teeth had special attention-- they were fed properly, her food was well chewed, and her teeth were kept clean.

Do you know what foods are best for the teeth? Milk and eggs, of course. To tell the truth, Betty Jean isn't very fond of either milk or eggs, straight, so her mother gives her these foods in the form of custards, milk soups, souffles, omlets, cocoa, and all kinds of milk and egg desserts, like tapioca pudding, blanc mange, and sponge cake. There are dozens of ways to use milk, and eggs, if one uses her imagination, and a cookbook.

Besides milk and eggs, Betty Jean has plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole-grain cereals, and hard breads. These foods not only contain building materials, but they also stimulate the child to exercise her teeth, and that is quite necessary. Good-exercise foods are those we eat raw, such as lettuce, and celery, and apples, and raw carrot salad.

It is sad but true that many mothers do not realize their responsibility about a child's first teeth. Cavities, decay, and the premature loss of these teeth affect a child's general health. Bad first teeth also prevent the jaw from developing properly, and disturb the eruption of the second teeth.

The other day I read of a unique health poster, used at the East Harlem Nursing and Health Demonstration, in New York City. This health poster is a looking glass, fastened to the wall, close to the floor, and high enough so that a child can see his whole figure in the glass. This looking glass health poster is particularly helpful, in teaching children about their teeth. Instead of

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pointing out a picture of a child, with white and perfect teeth, the health nurse shows the youngster his own teeth, in the looking glass. He takes a personal interest in the boy in the mirror, and becomes quite enthusiastic, in seeing his double brush his teeth.

There are a number of questions to answer today, before I broadcast a recipe.

First question: "Is it harmful for children to eat pure candy?"

Answer: Sugar itself is a desirable part of a child's diet. However, it should not be served in too large quantities, and between meals, thus spoiling the child's appetite for other essential foods. Sweets should never be given to children between meals, or during the first course of a meal. Careful mothers even train their children to eat cereals, without sugar. The proper time to serve sweets is at the end of the meal. A little wholesome candy may be served with the dessert as a special treat.

Second question--I'll have to read part of this letter, in order to reach the question: "Dear Aunt Sammy: Some time ago you broadcast a list of the six important foods that should be included in a daily diet for a growing child. I have three children, all in school, and I should like to know whether they are getting the proper foods this winter."

I shall repeat the list of foods which should be included in a daily diet for a growing child:

First, there is at least a pint of milk a day. Many children want more, and can take it, without omitting other essential foods.

Second, there is an egg, or a little meat, or fish. These foods supply the iron, which is lacking in milk.

Third, there is fruit, in two meals out of three. This is a good rule to keep in mind, all the time. Fresh fruit is best-- fruit juice or fruit pulp, for very young children. If fresh fruit is not available, dried fruit may be used at one meal, and either a little tomato juice, or a raw green vegetable, such as lettuce, in the other. These foods help supply the needed vitamins.

Fourth, every one of the three meals a day should provide for "roughage." It may be supplied by whole-grain cereal breakfast foods, or whole-wheat bread, or by potatoes. These foods are needed to prevent constipation.

Fifth, at one meal a day, there should be some vegetable besides potatoes.

Sixth, every meal should contain a little butter or cream. Butter fat is an essential food for children, for it contains a most important vitamin.

You might like to make a list of the foods your child eats, and see if they include, each day, all six of these different kinds of foods: milk, eggs, vegetables, fruit, whole-grain cereals, and butter or cream.

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Next question: "Will you please broadcast a method of cooking spinach, which my children will like?"

Answer: I have a recipe, from the Bureau of Home Economics, for cooking spinach with cream. It really is very good, cooked by this method. By the way, do you know how to wash spinach, so that it will be quite free from sand? Whether you wash it in running or standing water, lift the spinach out. Never let the water drain from it. If so, the sand which falls to the bottom will get on the leaves again, no matter how many times the spinach is washed.

Speaking of sand in spinach reminds me of the mother who told her small boy to eat his spinach, because it contained lots of iron. "Yes, I feel it, when I chew," said the small boy.

Now for the recipe-- Spinach with Cream. Four ingredients, as follows:

2 pounds spinach
4 tablespoons butter
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup cream

Perhaps we'd better check the four ingredients: (Repeat)

Wash the spinach thoroughly in running water until free from grit. Press the spinach into a saucepan, add a very small quantity of water, or cover the pan and cook the spinach in the water which clings to the leaves. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes or until well wilted, and stir the spinach occasionally so that it cooks evenly. Chop the spinach very fine. Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the cream and salt, and when hot add the chopped spinach, but no liquid, and simmer until fairly dry and creamy. Add more salt if needed.

I'm sorry not to have a menu for you today. How would you like to have a suggestion for a Sunday breakfast? Prunes and apricots are good, stewed together. That makes the first course. Who has another suggestion? Scrambled eggs? Very well, Stewed Prunes and Apricots, and Scrambled Eggs. What shall we have for bread? Toast? No-- we're tired of toast. Let's have oatmeal muffins, made according to the recipe in the cookbook. I don't know which page it's on, but the recipe is in the Muffin Department of the Radio Cookbook. Now let's see what we have; Stewed Prunes and Apricots; Scrambled Eggs; Oatmeal Muffins; and a beverage.
